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## Mexico

### Grain and Feed

## Mexico Publishes the Proposal of Rule on Cereal Products & By-Products (NOM-247-SSA1-2005)

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**Report Highlights:**

On June 2, 2008, the Secretariat of Health (SSA) published a proposed regulation affecting cereals, food prepared with cereals, cereal flours, bread and other bakery products. The regulation proposes maximum tolerances for a wide variety of substances used in the preparation of these products. Once approved, it will replace NOM-147-SSA1-1996.

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Includes PSD Changes: No  
Includes Trade Matrix: No  
Unscheduled Report  
Mexico City [MX1]  
[MX]

**Introduction:** This report summarizes an announcement from the Secretariat of Health (SSA) published in Mexico's "*Diario Oficial*" (Federal Register) on June 2, 2008.

**Disclaimer:** This summary is based on a *cursory* review of the subject announcement and therefore should not, under any circumstances, be viewed as a definitive reading of the regulation in question, or of its implications for U.S. agricultural export trade interests. In the event of a discrepancy or discrepancies between this summary and the complete regulation or announcement as published in Spanish, the latter shall prevail.

**Title:** Proposal of Official Mexican Norm PROY-NOM-247-SSA1-2005, Goods and Services. *Cereals and Cereal Products. Cereals, Cereal Flours, Semolas or Semolinas. Cereal Based Foods of Edible Grains, Flours, Semolas or Semolinas and their Mixtures. Bakery Products. Sanitary and Nutritional Specifications and Provisions. Testing methods.*

**FAS/Mexico's Executive Summary:** SSA published the proposal of Official Mexican Norm NOM-247-SSA1-2005, which establishes the nutrition and sanitary specifications on cereal products and sub-products, edible grains, cereals, cereal flour, cereal based edible grains, flours, semola, semolinas or their mixtures and bakery products. It proposes specifications for transportation, warehousing, and maximum limits for contaminants in cereals intended for human consumption. It also, proposes specifications for moisture content, percent of damaged grain, percentage of pests and temperature. For cereal flours and cereal based edible products, the regulation proposes specifications for food colorings, moisture content, microbiologicals, additives (pH regulators, stabilizers, humectants, scents and flavorings, thickeners, gelling agents, preservatives, yeasts, emulsifiers, dough conditioners and other like substances), contaminants as well as nutrient specifications. Compliance with this regulation is mandatory for all individuals and entities involved in processing and/or importing these products into Mexico.

**Background:** On December 10, 1999, the Secretariat of Health (SSA) first published NOM-147-SSA1-1996, Goods and Services. *Cereal products and Sub-products. Cereal Flours, Semolas and Semolinas. Cereal Based Foods of Edible Grains, Flours, Semolas or Semolinas and their Mixtures. Bakery Products. Sanitary and Nutritional Specifications and Provisions.* Later on June 10, 2000, the regulation was enforced. Once approved and enforced, the proposed NOM-247-SSA1-2005 will supersede the above mentioned NOM.

**Important dates:**

1. **Publication date:** June 2, 2008.
2. **Effective date:** December 2, 2008.
3. **Start of comment period:** June 2, 2008.
4. **End of comment period:** July 31, 2008.

**Summary of Main Points:**

**Products Affected:** Domestic and imported cereals, food prepared with cereals, edible grains, cereal flours and cereal baked breads and products.

**NOTE:** Cereal Based Foods for infants are not subject to this regulation.

**Important features of the regulation:**

Definitions are introduced and symbols are defined.

Some of the most important requirements for the different products include:

**Cereals:**

- o Individuals and entities involved in processing or importing these products must comply with the provisions established in NOM-028-FITO-1995 in the "REFERENCES" chapter, which refers to the quarantine activities required for specific products against the introduction of pests.
- o The maximum limit of aflatoxins is set at 20 µg/kg.
- o Cereal with a maximum level of aflatoxins of 20 µg/kg must not be stored in the same warehouse.

**Cereal flours, semolas and semolinas:**

- o Pesticides used on the grains in transportation and storage have to comply with the established maximum application rate and maximum residue established in the approved catalog of pesticides.
- o Maximum permissible levels are established concerning humidity, foreign matter (fragmented insects and rodent hair) and microbiological organisms (aerobic mesophilic and coliform bacteria).
- o The maximum limit of aflatoxins is 20 µg/kg while for flour from nixtamalized corn it is 12 µg/kg<sup>1</sup>.
- o Maximum limits of metals and additives are proposed as well.
- o Propose nutrient specifications for folic acid, iron, thiamine, riboflavin, niacin and zinc.

**Cereal or grain and flour based food:**

- o Microbiological maximum limits for aerobic mesophilic are set at 10,000 UFC/g, total coliforms at <30 UFC/g and negative result to *salmonella* spp., specifically for pasta with egg as an ingredient.
- o The use of listed additives, colorants, antioxidants, flavoring enhancers, sweeteners, stabilizers, humectants, pH regulators, scents and flavorings is allowed provided they are in accordance to the Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP).

**Breads and other baked foods (cookies, white bread, integral bread, cakes and pies):**

- o Limits for aerobic mesophilic, total coliforms, *staphylococcus aureus*, *salmonella* spp., *escherichia coli* are proposed for each product.
- o It proposes the use of flavoring enhancers, dough conditioners, antioxidants, colorants, preservatives, sweeteners, emulsifiers, stabilizers, thickeners, gelling agents, humectants, pH regulators, flavorings and scents in compliance with the levels indicated for each additive.

Also all products subject to comply with the provisions included in this NOM must comply with what was established in NOM-086-SSA1-1994, Goods and Services. *Food and non-alcoholic beverages with modifications in their composition. Nutrient Specifications.*

Sampling and Test methods to be followed for each case are explained in the appendix.

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<sup>1</sup> Nixtamalization typically refers to a process for the preparation of maize (corn) in which the grain is soaked and cooked in an alkaline solution, usually limewater and hulled.

This NOM cancels NOM-147-SSA1-1996, Goods and Services. *Cereal products and Sub-products. Cereal Flours, Semolas and Semolinas. Cereal Based Foods of Edible Grains, Flours, Semolas or Semolinas and Their Mixtures. Bakery Products. Sanitary and Nutritional Specifications and Provisions.*

**FAS Mexico post comments:** When NOM-147 was published, parties involved in the industry, which could be affected by that norm, reported that the maximum limits established were well over their internal quality control, so no modifications to their production process was needed. Concerning imported product, U.S. standards are stricter than those outlined in the text so current imports should not be affected when enforced. However, aflatoxin maximum limit levels, which were not described precisely in NOM-147, and a more extensive and detailed list of maximum limits required for each product are two factors that must be addressed because if not in compliance with NOM-247, provisions could be a trade irritant.